മി. സ്പീക്കർ: ആ ഒരു പായിൻറിനെപ്പററി പറഞ്ഞുകഴിഞ്ഞ സ്ഥിതിക്കു് ഇനി അതേപ്പററി ആവർത്തിക്കേണ്ട ആവശ്യമില്ല.

ശ്രീ. കെ. കെ. കണ്ണൻ: അതുകൊണ്ടു തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ ഈ അവകാശം നിഷേധിച്ചാൽ അതു തിച്ചയായും വലിയ ഒരു അപരാധമായിരിക്കും എന്നു ചൂണ്ടിക്കാണിക്കുവാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. ഇത്രമാത്രമാണു് എനിക്കവർക്കു കമ്മിററിയെപ്പററി സംസാരിക്കുവാനുള്ളതു്.

ഇനി മറെറാരു സംഗതി ചൂണ്ടിക്കാണിക്കുവാനുള്ളതു ഗവമെൺറു് ഒരു പാർട്ടി എന്ന നിലയിൽ ഏതെങ്കിലും ഒരു അഡ്ജൂഡിക്കേഷൻ സംഗതിയിൽ വന്നാൽ ആ അഡ്ജൂഡിക്കേഷനേറമേൽ അവസാന ഉത്തരവു് പാസ്സാക്കുന്നതിൽ ഗവമെൺറിനു അഭിപ്രായവ്യത്യാസമുണ്ടായാൽ അക്കാര്യം ലജിസ്ലേച്ചറിൻെറ അഭിപ്രായത്തിനു വിട്ടുകൊടുക്കണമെന്നുള്ള ഒരു വ്യവസ്ഥ ഈ ബില്ലിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുള്ളതിനെ കുറിച്ചാണു്. അതായതു്, ഒരു അവാർഡു് ഗവമെൺറിനു് സ്വീകരിക്കാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ലാതെവന്നാൽ അതു നിയമസഭയുടെ മുമ്പാകെ കൊണ്ടുവന്നു് അതിൻെറ അഭിപ്രായം അറിഞ്ഞതിനുശേഷമേ ആ അവാർഡിൻെറമേൽ അവസാനതീരുമാനം എടുക്കാവൂ എന്നു് ഇവിടെ വ്യവസ്ഥ ചെയ്തുകാണുന്നു. ഇതു ഏറെറവും ദോഷകരമായ ഒരു വ്യവസ്ഥയാണെന്നു പറയാതിരിക്കാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. ഒരു പണിമുടക്കുണ്ടായാൽ തൊഴിലാളികൾ വിഷമിക്കുമെന്നുള്ളതു തീച്ചയാണു്. പണിമുടക്കു് എത്രത്തോളം നീട്ടിക്കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്നുവോ അത്രത്തോളം തൊഴിലാളികൾ വിഷമിക്കുകതന്നെ ചെയ്യും. ഇപ്രകാരം ഏറെറവും ക്ലേശിച്ചുകൊണ്ടു് നിത്യപട്ടിണിക്കാരായ തൊഴിലാളികൾ അവരുടെ സർവ്വവിധത്തിലുള്ള കഴിവുകളും വിനിയോഗിച്ചു് ഒരു അവാർഡു് ഉണ്ടാക്കിയതിൻെറ ശേഷം ആ വിധിയുടെ മേൽ ഒരു അവസാന ഉത്തരവു് പാസാക്കുന്നതിനു ഗവമെൺറു സന്നദ്ധത കാണിക്കാതിരുന്നാൽ നിയമസഭയുടെ അഭിപ്രായത്തിനു വിട്ടുകൊടുക്കാമെന്നു പറയുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അതു അഡ്ജൂഡിക്കേഷൻെറ താല്പര്യത്തെ പരാജയപ്പെടുത്തുകയായിരിക്കും ചെയ്യുന്നതെന്നുള്ളതിനു സംശയമില്ല. അതുകൊണ്ടു് ആ ഭാഗം നീക്കം ചെയ്യണമെന്നാണു് എൻെറ അഭിപ്രായം; ലേബറിനെ സംബന്ധിച്ചു് ഇവിടെ പ്രസ്താവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള സംഗതികളോടു് ഞാനും ഏറക്കുറെ യോജിക്കുന്നു. അതുകൊണ്ടു് ഈ ബില്ലിലെ ദോഷവശങ്ങൾ നീക്കംചെയ്തു് ഒരു നിയമമാക്കി കൊണ്ടുവരുന്നതിനു ഗവമെൺറു് ആത്മാർത്ഥമായി ശ്രമിക്കണമെന്നു് അപേക്ഷിക്കയും ഈ ബിൽ സെലക്ടു് കമ്മിററിക്കു് അയയ്ക്കണമെന്നു് അപേക്ഷിക്കയും ചെയ്തുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

The question that the Travancore Cochin Industrial Disputes Bill be referred to the Select Committee consisting of the members mentioned above was put and carried.

The bill was referred to the Select Committee.

The Agricultural Income-tax Bill—Extension of time for submission of the Select Committee Report

Sri. A. J. John: I request that the time fixed for the submission of the Report of the Select Committee on the Agricultural Income-tax Bill be extended up to 11th Aprill 1950.

The motion was adopted

Announcement regarding the extension of the sitting of the Assembly

Mr. Speaker: Before we proceed to the discussion under rule 26, I have to make an announcement. A request has been made by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister that the Assembly Session may be extended to the 11th and 12th April. Under the present programme the Session is normally to end by today. I do not think that the House has any objection to the proposal. The Session is extended to Tuesday, the 11th and Wednesday, the 12th April.

Discussion under Rule 26 re. the reconstruction of the Valiathurai pier

Sri. L. M. Pylee: My reason for bringing this matter regarding the reconstruction of the Valiathurai pier is because of the reply given by the Hon'ble Minister the other day to a short notice question put by me on this subject. Sir, the importance of this minor port and the urgent necessity to reconstruct the damaged pier are not sufficiently understood. Valiathurai is a minor port which was in a flourishing condition before the pier was damaged

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some two years ago, and if my information is correct, Sir, during the five years that preceded that accident, there has been a large amount of export and import trade through that port. During that period, according to my information, 43,02,799 bags of grains, 13,253 tons of other commercial articles, 36,431 bales of tobacco, besides various other articles have been handled at this port. Sir, during that period again, 390 ships of large size have touched this port. From these figures, it is seen that this port was in a flourishing condition and thousands of workmen in this part of the country depended for their daily life on this port. Now, by a sheer accident, two years ago, the pier got damaged, with the result that no ships are now touching the port. One important result of this has been that nearly 4,000 workmen have been thrown out of work in that area. 4,000 workmen with their families are now in utter starvation and helplessness. A visit to this place will show in what misery the people in that area are living. You could find huts that are not thatched for years. You will find that a population afflicted with disease, poverty and starvation is living there in distress for the last three years. Besides that, there are a large number of landing crafts which have been used for loading and unloading cargo. Several persons of that place had invested their small savings upon the construction of those landing crafts, each of which costs about Rs. 1,000, and these crafts are now left to rot for want of work. Again, there are a large number of godowns erected by private individuals and by companies and I believe by the Government also, which are now lying idle. In fact, it is economic distress that is apparent in this area and if some measure of relief is not taken in the matter of reconstructing this pier, certainly, the situation would become very serious and the distress would only increase.

It is for want of funds, I understand, that this work of reconstructing the pier is postponed. In reply to my question the other day, by the Hon'ble Minister for Public Works, it was said that Rs. 4 lakhs have been received as compensation for the damage from the company which was responsible for the damage. I presume that money will be available for the purpose of reconstruction. Not only that there are several things that have been recovered by the salvaging process and when that process is completed, there would be a large amount of materials that can be made available for the resonstruction of the pier. Therefore, Sir, in view of the fact that much economic distress is prevalent in that locality, relief should be immediately made available. In view of the fact that a part of the money required for the purpose is already in our hands, I would suggest that the reconstruction be taken up urgently instead of being treated as a matter of routine.

Sir, I may be permitted to suggest that as a temporary relief, shore-landing may be permitted I understand that this has been successfully carried out recently and that a large amount of cargo has been brought to the land by this process of shore-landing; even though the pier might not be in a fit condition, still, this process of shore-landing might be tried and it would be a great boon to the people who are now suffering from distress. These are the facts of the situation. I would, therefore, request the Government to take up this matter immediately.

The Hon'ble Minister, the other day, mentioned that reports of investigations are being made. Sir, it is nearly three years since this accident occurred, and it would not be proper if these 4,000 men with their families are kept, if I may say so, in cold storage. This is a matter affecting their livelihood, or rather, of obtaining a livelihood. The fishing industry is not new, and I would request the Government to attach importance to this matter and to treat it with that urgency which it requires and that immediate steps be taken to have the reconstruction work started, and that in the meanwhile, at least a temporary measure of relief be accorded by providing the facility for shore-landing.

Sri. E. John Philipose : Sir, on behalf of Government, I would express the regret of Government at the delay that has been caused in the reconstruction of the pier that has been responsible for maintaining the livelihood of a few thousands at Valiathurai. I may also state that this delay was not altogether avoidable, because since this accident, Government have been trying to effect a settlement with the Steam Navigation Company, whose steamer caused this accident. Pending the final decision of that settlement, it was not possible, nor was it proper, for this Government to interfere with the structures that remained and the structures that went down. There was a case pending in relation to that, and inspection by Government or by Court would become necessary in time. That was mainly responsible for the Government not taking up this work earlier than now. After this has been settled, Government have been considering as to how best this pier could be revived and reconstructed.

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[Sri. E. John Philiphose]

The first problem was with regard to salvage of those materials which had gone under water. My Hon'ble friend, Sri. Pylee, stated that apart from the four lakhs of rupees, Government would also be able to get by salvage, substantial quantities of usable material from under the sea. But I understand from the reports that I have received from the technical experts that about 350 tons would be probably the approximate weight of materials that have gone under water. This consists of iron materials, frames and derricks, which have all been in salt water for about two years. Therefore, it is now regarded by the Department as having value nothing more than that of scrap. Thus, it is worked up that allowing 50 per cent for deterioration in salt water and 25 per cent for irrecoverable small fittings, the weight of materials recoverable from the ocean may not be above 100 tons, and the value of those 100 tons would not exceed four to five thousand rupees. That is the real effect of salvage. And then, in the face of that, Government was up against the problem whether they should give the salvaging on contract which I understand will be undertaken only on a cost plus percentage basis, which would mean that it would work out to a minimum of Rs. 40 to 50 thousand whereas the cost of the recoverable material would be only Rs. 4,000 or so.

In the meanwhile, Government have been considering as to how best this could be reconstructed and they have been advised that it would not be desirable, nor enduring, to have to repair this pier, but that the best thing that could be done in the circumstances would be to construct a new pier. With that in view, designs are now with Government for a new pier. Plans are also available in the Chief Engineer's Office. The Chief Engineer tells me that though the cost has not been worked out, the construction of a pier of this size and this nature, would probably cost about Rs. 15 to 20 lakhs. As against that, we have on hand, as a result of compensation, a sum of Rs. 4 lakhs, and we may be able to get another Rs. 5,000 or so from salvage. But the point that I was trying to make out was that one of the reasons for the delay was in giving over this contract to a salvaging agent whose rate was salvage cost plus percentage, out of which we can get nothing more than Rs. 4 or 5 thousand. If Government, as Government has now decided, to reconstruct this pier on that basis, then the better thing would be for Government to entrust the salvaging work also to the contractors who undertake to build this pier. That would eliminate unnecessary cost and would probably give substantial savings at least to an extent of some Rs. 30,000 to Government.

Sri. A. Thanu Pillai: If that is done, will not the contractor take into account the cost of salvaging also?

Sri. E. John Philipose: In any case as far as construction work is concerned, the contractor has got to do a little bit of salvaging and therefore along with it, this would considerably minimise our expenditure. Another point is that for recovering the materials we have to spend about rupees forty thousand or so. If the work of salvaging is entrusted to him there will be some saving for this Government. There is to be the reconstruction of the pier, and not merely salvaging of materials. That is the position so far.

As I also pointed out there is some hardship caused, and it prevails even now. As far that matter the Chief Engineer of the State is in contact with Consulting Engineers and Construction Engineers and industrialists who are competent to take up this work and after they have gone into the necessary plans and designs, tender will be called by the Chief Engineer for construction of a pier. Immediately this is done, Government propose to take up the work in hand. It was stated by Mr. Pylee that the date for construction of the pier was not mentioned. In the very nature of things the actual period for reconstruction of the pier could not be mentioned. But I may assure him and the other Hon'ble Members of the House that Government is at present in contact with the Engineers for getting a proper estimate of expenditure and after Government had gone into the total capital outlay required, they will decide as to how best the pier could be contsructed within a period of years. In any case the question of construction of the pier will be taken up and done as shortly as possible and I think there is now some definiteness in this matter. There is no point, on behalf of Government in fixing the time and date which obviously is not in my power. All that I can say on behalf of Government is that they will definitely try and see that the utmost is done to speed up the matter. In the present budget there is a provision of two lakhs for improvement of pier. Again there was some comment about the way in which diversion could be effected. I would say the sum of 2 lakhs earmarked will be mainly utilised for repairs only.

Sri. L. M. Pylee: What about the shore landing referred to by me?

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Sri. E. John Philipose : I will study the question and see that all that is practicable is done in the direction.

Sri. L. M. Pylee: I said that about 5 lakhs of food grain bags come through that. What is the view of Government about it?

Sri. E. John Philipose : I will study the question in all the aspects pointed out in the statement of the Hon'ble Member and do all that is practicable in the existing circumstances.

The House adjourned at 4-53 p.m. to meet again at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the 11th April 1950.

V. KRISHNAMOORTHI AYYAR,
Secretary to the Legislative Assembly.

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